

Boston, Tuesd. Evng. May 27. 1862.

Dear friend Webb,

I must not let tomorrow's mail depart without a line, if only to acknowledge the safe receipt of yrs. of April 19, with yr. Son Alfred's financial Notes, & the Bank Draft for £ 19. 13. 1, - which was handed to me in New York ^{by Oliver Johnson} now nearly 3 weeks since, while I was attending the Annual Meetg. there. It was a very busy week - thence I went to Leicester & was much engaged in out-door cares (& I get quite tired out, now-a-days, sooner than formerly) - thence to Boston, where much work had ~~accumulated~~ accumulated; - & such are my reasons for the delay, which, after all, are not sufficient, nor satisfactory to myself; altho' I must add, it was my wish to get time for a longer letter than I can possibly now write which had much to do with the delay. Now is a very crowded time with me; for, tomorrow, begins our Annual New England Antislavery Convention, and we are naturally both busy & anxious. We have matter eno' for a stirring meeting, and I don't doubt we shall have it; but, altho' the Amⁿ. people is not a mob, by any means, & is as little inclined to mob-ism as any other people, (always excepting the slaveholding portion where every abomination grows in a fit & luxuriant soil) yet a little handful of rowdies, if countenanced by a few demagogues, may make a good deal of trouble, ~~not~~ that we have any reason to expect it tomorrow, but it is possible.

Our Annual Meeting at New York was in every respect all we could desire - Fully attended, with manifestations of the deepest interest & sympathy, perfectly orderly & quiet, from first to last.

You will of course have seen the reports of Cheever's, Phillips's, Tilton's, Wells Brown's, & other speeches, & will probably have read some of them.

In the same ship by which I hope to send this goes my excellent cousin & friend Rev. Frederick Frothingham, lately of Portland, in the State of Maine. At his request I have given him a letter of introduction to you, & to some others of our antislavery friends abroad. He is worthy to be commended by the best here to the best in your land. As a minister, he has been true on the Antislavery question, & has faithfully discharged a Christian minister's duty. I hope he may make an early visit to Dublin, but his plans are not fully matured yet. Busy as you are, & always so generous in your hospitality, I do not ask that you put yourself to inconvenience even for so good a man as Mr. F., or ^{to} feel under any ~~obligation~~ call to go out of your way to entertain him. But I want you to meet each other. His views are sensible & carefully formed, and he can tell you much of the state of things with us, present & prospective.

[Our President has again sadly disappointed the Antislavery portion of the ^{country & the} army, - which now has grown to be a very large portion, - by over-ruling General Hunter's Proclamation of Emancipation in the States of Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina, ^{as he did General Fremont's in Missouri.} Gen. Hunter's proclamation went even further than Fremont's, unconditionally liberating all the Slaves in those States, as a military necessity, & not merely the Slaves of rebels. It was a patriotic, a wise, a noble deed, fully warranted

by law, (if John Quincy Adams & others experience are any
authority on Constitutional law,) and by policy, as the common
sense of every observer of the causes of this War, & the true
methods of its successful prosecution, cannot fail to teach.

Yet the President again interposes his veto. Why? To you &
to multitudes abroad,
it will again seem, I doubt not, ^{to indicate} ~~as betokening~~ an anxious
regard for slavery in the President, an unwillingness to touch it,
and more, a determination not to touch it. You will think it most
unreasonable, & so do we; short-sighted, & so do we; an act
of over-weening caution & timidity, & so do we. You will think
I presume, (from your former & recent letters)
it, the act of a slaveholder at heart. Disappointed as I am
by the President's act, I cannot therein agree with you. Sad
as I am, at the President's failure to do the right & wise thing,
I would do justice to his act, his words, & motives. I do not
believe he has any love of Slavery, or seeks to conserve it. He
has publicly declared Slavery to be at war with the best interests
of the country, & has called on the Slaveholding States to co-operate
with the Northern in removing their fruitful cause of dissension and
strife. Congress, under his advice, have offered pecuniary aid to any
State adopting an Emancipation-policy. Now it must be admitted
that Gen. Hunter's Proclamation, in a political ^{sense,} ~~state,~~ interferes with
the proposal & policy of the President, & ^{would} even seem to cast a doubt
on the sincerity & honesty of it, if allowed to stand. Accordingly the
President says; I have made an offer to the you, Slaveholding
States; I again offer it & urge it upon you; I warn you as a
magistrate; & I beseech you as a friend who designs you no harm,
not to disregard it. You cannot, he says, be blind to the signs of the
times.

he says,
Do not, rashly throw away the opportunity to do an immense
good, - to your country and yourselves. Slow, timid, ^{with} too patient, & too trustful of the Slaveholders, as he is, I do think
his appeal a very solemn one to these ~~unhappy~~ States.
The fault of the Proclamation lies in its evident belief that those
States are capable of a calm appreciation of the difficulties of
question, & ~~have~~ a willingness to do anything to get rid of Slavery.
great danger is that he will persist in this slow & waiting policy
until the hour for right action is past, hopelessly & forever.
evidence to the belief, which many good men & good judges hold,
that the President means to utter the great words "Liberty for all"
at what he believes ^{to be} the "providential hour". But the time
hour of repentance for a great Nation, as well as individual, is
is Now; now is the accepted time & the day of salvation.
tremble when we think of the terrible impending dangers; if we
thought the President corrupt, & pro-slavery, we should despair of
the country, so far as any human help is concerned. But we
believe him an honest man and a friend to his country, who
at the good of all its people; and that his policy, if weak, is
designedly wicked. Very true, the one may prove as disastrous
as the other; & therefore we are anxious. No more critical
perilous time has ever come to us, I think, than the present.
The miserable Northern Sympathizers with the rebels are rejoicing
at the President's course, and at the refusal of Congress to "define
the Slave property of rebels". Such facts should open his eyes. But it
would seem that our Government is smitten with judicial blindness,
is leading us all astray. May light look in upon us, soon.

MS. B. 1. 6 v. 9, p. 32
But here I must stop. If what is enclosed in brackets can help the
leave accept it or want of something better. - Yrs. ever, J. May

I am told by Mr. Garrison that Lord Palmerston's organ in London had openly espoused the side of the Southern Rebels. I have not myself seen the journal, and he could not lay his hand upon it then.

At all events, the opinion is certainly growing stronger here that England is at this time, in spirit and policy, hostile to the United States Government. I wish there were not the reasons & grounds, which I believe there are, for this judgment. The case of the "Bermuda" steamer, sold in England to the Rebel Government, openly loaded in an English port with supplies of the most valuable & abundant character, and carried into Savannah, Georgia, in violation of the blockade, themselves fitted to act as a privateer on Northern Commerce is a most marked evidence & proof in the case, ^{provided} the above ^{publicly} asserted facts are established. Let us hope they may be disproved. Meantime let us still more strongly hope that the reserved voice of the British people will yet speak out against the Slaveholders and their Desperate Attempt to establish a Slaveholding Empire.

I am, in haste & very truly Yrs
 Saml May Jr

I have my passage in Eng. Steamer (unclosed) since more

